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Message Text

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20
ORIGIN EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SS-20

NSC-10 PRS-01 /057 R

DRAFTED BY EA/TB:VLTOMSETH:AVW
APPROVED BY EA/TB:JBDEXTER
---------- 076811
R 220058Z DEC 73
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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E.O. 11652 N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TH
SUBJ: SEKSAN PRASOETKUN

REF: BANGKOK 19627

1. FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS PROVIDED BY AN AMERICAN WHO ATTENDED WASHINGTON SESSION OF SEKSAN'S TRAVELLING ROAD SHOW: PROGRAM WAS HELD IN BASEMENT OF WASHINGTON CHURCH DECEMBER 15. APPROXIMATELY 500 PEOPLE, MOSTLY THAI STUDENTS ATTENDED. EVEN THOUGH ADMISSION WAS $5 PER PERSON, FURTHER DONATIONS WERE SOLICITED FROM THE AUDIENCE AND IT WAS SUBSEQUENTLY ANNOUNCED THAT $311 HAD BEEN COLLECTED IN THIS MANNER. IN ADDITION, THAI GOODIES WERE SOLD, THEREBY BRINGING IN FURTHER CASH FOR THE TREASURY. SUTHEP WONGKHAMHAENG SANG AND MINGLED WITH THE CROWD WHILE THE PLATE WAS BEING PASSED. HE WAS FOLLOWED BY A HOME-MADE MOVIE OF THE DEMONSTRATIONS WHICH HAD NO SOUND TRACK AND WAS OF VERY POOR QUALITY. SEKSAN THEN TOOK THE STAGE AND SPOKE WITH CONSIDERABLE ELOQUENCE AND FEELING ON TWO BASIC THEMES--THE LOT OF POOR PEOPLE IN THAILAND AND THE LACK OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, ESPECIALLY FOR THE POOR. WHEN HE HAD FINISHED,HE INVITED QUESTIONS, MOST OF WHICH TURNED OUT TO BE RATHER INANE.
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2. THAI EMBASSY PERSONNEL WERE OUT IN FORCE AND WERE WELL-TREATED BY THE STUDENT ORGANIZERS OF THE PROGRAM.

AMBASSADOR ANAND WAS INVITED TO MAKE A FEW REMARKS AND HE EXPRESSED THE INTEREST OF THE THAI COMMUNITY IN THE U.S. IN WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING IN THAILAND AND IN THE CONCERNS OF THE STUDENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE. EVERYONE PRESENT, INCLUDING RTG OFFICIALS, STUDENTS, AND SEKSAN HIMSELF, SEEMED ANXIOUS TO CONVINCE EVERYONE ELSE OF HIS OWN MODERATION AND OPEN-MINDEDNESS. THE VIP'S (PHUYAI) WERE ALL PLEASED BY THE RESPECT THEY WERE ACCORDED AND THE YOUNG PEOPLE WERE PROUD THAT THEY HAD HANDLED ALL THE ARRANGEMENTS. IN SUM, IT WAS A VERY THAI EVENT, CHARAC-TERIZED BY TOLERANCE AND GOOD HUMOR. RUSH

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